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Fifth Memoir of Sr Lucia

Our Lady of Fatima

Fifth Memoir

The Fifth Memoir of Sister Lucia (1988)

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To the Rector of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Fatima I received your letter, Reverend Father, dated 23 November 1988, in which you ask me to better describe the image of my father, since what I wrote in this regard in the Memoirs is so incomplete and you wish to make our home a place of reflection about the family. For this reason, I am willing, because I remember my parents as admirable examples of a Christian family, united in faith, hope and love. It is true, that the picture I give, in the Memoirs, is very inadequate because I wrote amidst several difficulties—lack of time and of the necessary conditions to render it better by rereading and correcting it. And, then, they were published without my previous knowledge. But what can be done? I offer my sacrifice to God, hoping that from everything, He may draw forth His own Glory.

In the same letter, Your Reverence asks insistently for a response to your questionnaire sent by means of our Provincial Fr. Jeremias Carlos Vechina, and which was given to me by His Reverence on 31st October 1986 with the recommendation to respond as soon as it was possible. Because, at the time it was not possible for me to undertake this work, I placed it in the bottom of a drawer, where it has remained until now.

Seeing that, Your Reverence had to come here on April 14 1988, to deal with matters concerning the home of my parents, you repeated, with insistence, your request for a response to your questionnaire. On October 20, 1988, our present Provincial Fr. Pedro Lourenco Ferreira, at your request I think, advised me not to defer doing this work, believing it to be for the glory of God. In view of all these insistent requests and recommendations, above all, those of my Superiors in which I always see a sign of the will of God- I spoke about the matter with our Mother Prioress who considered it very carefully and decided to dispense me from assisting at some of the Community exercises, so that I would be able to dedicate the time to this work.

Therefore, believing this to be the will of God, and because it is what Your Reverence needs more speedily, I am going to begin by describing the portrait of my father, trusting in the maternal protection of Our Lady. The responses to your questionnaire will be made afterwards, but, for now, I must say that to some- those referring to the Apparitions—I cannot reply without authorization from the Holy See, unless you would like to ask for this permission and obtain it. Otherwise, I will go ahead, leaving these questions blank. I am going to begin the story about my father, responding to question number 16 on your questionnaire. And may God assist me, and may my father, who sees me from Heaven, take

my hand again, as he did when I was a child guiding it and teaching me to trace my on my forehead the sign of the Redeeming Cross of Christ Our Savior.

My Father, Before the Apparitions

“Was there anyone thought of as rich in the village of Aljustrel? And why?” Yes, there was the family Santos. It was a large Christian and practicing Catholic family. They lived near the Family Ferreira Rosa, to whom the houses belonged: and from whom the Sanctuary recently purchased, for a museum, the one which was my parents- comprising the house, patio and kitchen garden beyond the well. From there onwards, this family owned a great extension of properties in the direction of Montelo, Our Lady of Ortiga, Fatima, Valinhos, Cabeco, Charneca and Cova da Iria. My father’s aunt (1). She lived, I’m not sure for how long, with her two unmarried brothers, who when they died made her the heir of all their goods, thus she had two times more than all the other brothers and sisters.

It was my father, who while he lived, cultivated our lands together with hers, ploughing, sowing and reaping. She employed three labourers and a maid called Inacia. The men worked in the field under my father’s direction. One of the servants was a young boy of 12 or 13 years of age. He pastured a small flock of sheep which belonged to aunt Teresa: some 15 or 20 sheep, like ours all white and large of the Marina breed, very productive of offspring, wool and milk. When my father required that this boy go to help in the field work, he ordered the two flocks combined and taken altogether to pasture. He ordered the same when he had to plough some fields with grass, so that the two flocks at the same time as they were grazing, would manure the land. One of those days the boy went to help in the field work, by walking ahead of the oxen as they ploughed, cutting the grass and gathering the food for the animals. Upon returning home that night, the two flocks of sheep gave no trouble in being separated, because of their instinct for the water which they had in their troughs and for their own food, each one ran to their own pen, chewing the cud through the night, so that on the following day they gave better and more abundant milk.

Aunt Teresa afterwards married one of the workmen, Anastacio Vieria. He was a very good friend of my father’s and thus they continued, sharing between the two of them the farming tasks that had to be done. They had no children. when I was born, my father invited Uncle Anastacio to be my godfather at Baptism, something he and my aunt Teresa accepted with great pleasure. They asked my parents to give me to them, so they could bring me up as their own child and adopt me, but this my parents did not want. However they did allow them to take me to their home whenever they wished, which happened frequently, always with the hope of fulfilling their desire. My godmother Teresa said that it was also to relieve my mother, for in her charity, she was at this time, she was raising a little orphan, who had been left without a mother at birth.

Despite of the Santos family being of a peaceable nature and the Ferreura Rosa family being of a more expansive type, playing the harmonium and the guitar, arranging festas and dances- this still persisted during my childhood, and I referred to it slightly in the Memoirs- various members of the Santos family married those of the Ferreira Rosa family; among them my father and his sister Olympia who became the mother of the servants of God, Francisco and Jacinta Marto. Aunt Olympia in her first marriage, became the wife of my mother’s brother, Jose Ferreira Rosa, who after having been in Mozambique, returned from there bringing savings sufficient to allow him to restore the home of his parents, giving it the form that it has today, and to build for himself, when he married aunt Olympia, the home where the Servants of God, Francisco and Jacinta Marto were born. He died eight years after the marriage, leaving as heirs to his home and other possessions, his young wife who received two half and

his two orphaned children, Antonio and Manuel dos Santos Ferreria Rosa, who received the other half.

The Ferreira Rosa family distinguished itself by the practice of charity. My mother's aunt, Maria Isabel Ferreira (Rosa) taught children to read in the house which the Sanctuary eventually purchased as a museum. It must have been with her that my mother learned: my sister Teresa and my brother Manuel. She was unable to teach the other nieces and nephews, who were younger perhaps because of illness. I did not know her but I heard her spoken of with deepest affection, esteem and veneration, especially by my mother.

When I was small we still had an old wooden chest in our casarona, where, it was said, my great-grandmother hid her when during the French invasion, General Junot wished to kidnap her. This aunt of my mother gathered abandoned children to care for them and afterwards place them in the homes of good families who would love them and help them through life. She died unmarried, in the home of my grandparents, which afterwards my mother inherited. From my parents, I became the heir of this home and had the pleasure of donating it to Our Lady for Her Sanctuary of Fatima, in the hope that it may be for the glory of God, of Our Lady and the spiritual happiness of our pilgrim brothers and sisters who go there and enjoy seeing things as they were in former times. I believe that it was due to this aunt of mine, that it became the custom for the children of the region to come to play on our patio, together with me, and that the mothers came to leave their smallest children while they went about their different tasks. I have already referred to this in the memoirs.

My father loved to see the children in our house, and when it happened that he was at home, he amused them by telling them stories and playing with them. My father was very diligent about taking his children to the Baptismal font. One day I heard my mother speaking to Dr. Formigao in an interview. He was asking her about the date of my birth. My mother answered: "We say that it is on the 22nd of March, because she was registered as having been born on that day, but, in fact this is not the case. she was born on the 28th of March 1907. It was Holy Thursday; in the morning, I went to Holy Mass to receive Holy Communion, thinking I would return in the afternoon to visit the Blessed Sacrament, but it was not to be, since on that afternoon she was born. (Only then did I know the actual date of my birth. This is not surprising, because in Fatima, at that time, no one attached any importance to ones birthday, it was not a feast; therefore it was not something of which we spoke.)

Meanwhile, as she is registered as being born on the 22nd, we continue to say that this is her birthday. Right away her father made arrangements for her Baptism. It was not convenient for him the following week, because of his work, but, as it was required that the parents bring the child for baptism on the eighth day after birth—otherwise they would have to pay a fine—her father decided to give the date of her birth as the 22nd, so that the parish priest would baptize her on Holy Sunday, which was the 30th of the same month." He invited as godmother for my baptism, a young neighbour, a goddaughter of my mother. She was happy to accept and went to ask permission of her father. It was the custom in those times, that young girls could not take any responsibility without their parents' permission. Her father asked her what name they were going to give the child. She told him that it was Maria Rosa, because the mother already had four daughters and none of them had this name, which was hers; she was also called Maria Rosa and an infant who had already preceded me, whom God had already taken to Heaven, had been named Maria Rosa. Her father responded: "No! You must call her Lucia! If that is not so, I will not permit you to be the godmother".

She went to tell my parents, who surprised asked: "But where did your father get such a name?" However out of courtesy, they agreed that I should be named Lucia. Thus by the grace of God, I was baptized on Holy Saturday, 30th of March 1907, when the bells of the

Parish Church announced the Resurrection of the Lord. (At that time there was no civil register, it was only in the Parish Church). My father was of a calm nature, kindly and joyful; he liked music and festas and dances. So that even though the Santos family was of a different nature, he adapted very well to the ways of the Ferreira Rosa family. Her had no disputes with anyone, neither with the family nor with strangers.

He loved to please everyone and see everyone happy. For example, that little patch of land with fig trees, within our grounds, going towards the well, and which the Sanctuary purchased, it was my father who gave it to a certain family, because they lamented not having a fig tree near their home from which to gather figs to eat. Neither my father nor my mother wished that any poor person should go away from our door without something. If my father was at home, it was he who gave; if not it was my mother, if it was neither one or the other it was the older son or daughter, who would give the alms. To me—as the youngest—it happened often, because my sisters, in order not to interrupt their work, would send me, and this made me very happy. And, what was it we gave? Sometimes, a handful of potatoes; other times a bowl of kidney beans or of chick peas; other times a little olive oil was poured into small jars that they carried; or even piece of bread with sheep's cheese or a bowl of sweet olives for them to eat.

At times my mother, when she went to a salting board to fetch the meat for the family meal, would bring something extra, and put it in a drawer of the kitchen table, folded in a cabbage leaf and say: "Leave this here; it is for the poor beggar who appears asking for alms." Whenever there was meat left from the family meal, my mother placed it between two slices of bread, and put it on a small earthenware plate in the drawer, saying: "Leave this here: it is for the first person who comes along asking for alms."

I recall here what happened one day; my father was at home, sitting on the steps of a stairway which led to the attic, shelling beans. My mother was seated opposite, leaning against the corner of firewood, peeling potatoes. I was still very small, so I was playing outside on the patio, which was closed by a large gate made of wooden slats. I saw near the gateway a poor beggar asking for alms. I ran into the house and said to my father: "There's a poor man outside begging for alms." My father got up, went to the fireplace, and with his pen knife cut the string of black pudding they were hanging up to dry, and holding it up in his hand, he asked my mother: "Look here, may I give this to that poor man? Do we need it?" My mother replied: "Yes, you can. What we give to the poor has never left us in need."

My father very pleased went out to the gate to give the pudding to the poor man. Seeing it he raised his hands in prayer and prayed an Our Father and a Hail Mary. While the poor man prayed, my father remained in front of him, standing with his head uncovered. When the beggar had finished, he said "May the Lord grant good fortune to you and to your little girl." My father answered: "Goodbye my brother, until the next time!" And he went into the house again. I ran after my father and said to my mother: "The poor man prayed for father and me, so that God may give us good fortune." My mother replied: "And for me nothing?" I did not know what to say. Then my father said: "For you also, because you and I are one, everything that is mine is yours and our children's." My mother responded: "Then it's alright!" And the two of them remained in their humble work and friendly conversation, while I returned to the patio to play and watch for anymore beggars who might come asking for alms.

Certainly at that time I did not understand the full meaning of this event, but it made an impression on me and I did not forget it. Today, however, I understand its great moral and spiritual value. Often, at nightfall, the poor came asking for a place to rest. We always gave them somewhere to lie down. We shared our supper with them; they prayed the grace after meals with us which my father intoned and then the Rosary, if it was a day on which it was

prayed. Afterwards, during winter, while my mother tidied the kitchen, my sister worked on the loom and at the sewing, while my brother foddered the animals, giving them the final ration of the day. My father used to cut the chestnuts and sweet acorns, putting them on the embers to roast, so that they could eat them at nightfall while they worked to the sound of guitars, of fados, and popular songs and ballads of lengthy verses, which the poor folk would sing if they happened to be blind.

Or, if it was summer time, we went to the threshing floor, where there was always something to do—if it was not the day for husking—peeling, by moon- light and by the light of the lanterns hanging on the poles near by, the broad beans, kidney beans, peas, chick peas or lupin, which were kept for seed and sifting the seed from the cabbages, lettuces, turnips, etc. all the while taking in the cool air which was so refreshing. Our house was like a house for everyone, it had a door where all knocked and at which were all attended. Sometimes they came to ask for bread, if we had any, so that we could lend them one or two loaves, because they had finished theirs and it was not yet the day of baking a new batch. My mother always had some. “Go and take it, it’s there!”

In the summer, they came to ask for pitchers of water, because their wells and cisterns were dry, and to go and fetch it from a new spring was so far away. My mother and my father, if he had happened to be home, would always say yes, giving them the key to the cover of the well. My parents always kept the well closed with an iron padlock, so that no insects or animals, or children who were playing there would fall in- and saying: “Go there, and fill your pitchers.”

And God blessed it, because the water of our well never failed. Other times they came to ask, if we had any onions left which we could spare, because theirs had run out and those of the new harvest were still very small and it was a pity to gather them so early. “Go ahead”—answered my mother, or my father, if he was home—”to the baking room and take what you need.” My parents had them hanging on string from beams of wood on the roof of the baking room. And so it went on.... Thus all were our friends who were at the service of all.

One day my sister Maria dos Anjos said to my mother: “Why do you bake such large batches of bread? Afterwards we won’t eat it all and it just gets hard!” My mother replied: “So that we have some over to give to those who come and ask; and later on what ever is left can be cut into slices, toasted in the oven and used in the weary horse soup or fried so that everyone can eat it quite well.”

Frequently, they came to ask my mother if she would go to their homes, because someone was ill. My mother left everything and went, leaving whatever had to be done to any of my older sisters, who were at home. I recall one day, on which my godmother Teresa was in our house, talking with my mother. A small boy came, the son of my aunt Prazeres—theirs was the first house on the left side of our home, going towards Casa Velha—to ask my mother if she would go to his house, because his mother was ill. My mother quickly got up to go. My godmother Teresa told her: “well my dear, you’ll wear yourself out wanting to attend to everyone!” My mother replied: “never mind, I help others and God helps me.” If it happened to be at night that they came to call my mother, it was my father who got up to go and help.

Afterwards, he brought the message to my mother and, while she was dressing, he lit the lantern, so that she would not stumble or fall along the way. When the influenza epidemic came in 1918, only my parents, my brother Manuel, my sister Gloria and I were at home. It seems to me that my sister Carolina was in Leiria. The epidemic struck almost all the people. My mother and my sister Gloria went, from house to house, caring for the sick. One day, my uncle Ti Marto warned my father that he should not permit my mother or his daughters to go

to the homes of the sick to treat them, because it was an epidemic which was contagious and we might also get sick.

That evening, upon arriving, my father forbid my mother and his daughters to go to the homes of the sick to treat them. My mother listened, in silence to all that my father said and then responded: "Look you have a good point. Its just as you say. But, look here, how can we leave those people to die, without anyone there to give them a glass of water? It would be better if you came with me to see how these people are, and, then, if it's all right to leave them alone" And pointing to a large pot which she had hanging on a chain from the chimney, over the fire in the fireplace, she said: "Do you see that pot? It's full of chickens. Some are not ours; I brought them from the homes of the sick because ours were not enough for everyone. They're cooking in order to make a broth and I have over there, the small pots which I brought from their homes already, in which to carry them. If you would like to come with me, you could help carry the baskets with the pots of broth and, at the same time, you will be able to see for yourself and then we can decide what has to be done."

My father agreed. They filled the pots with broth and they went out together, each one with two baskets, one in each hand. A little later, my father returned with a baby in a little baby basket and said to my sister Gloria and to me: "Take care of this child. The parents are both in bed with fever and are not able to look after him." He went out again, and a little later returned with two more children, who were already able to walk but still could not take care of themselves, and he said: "Take care of these two also, they do nothing but cry at their parents bedside, and they both have fever and are not able to care for them."

And so he brought more. I don't remember how many. The next day they came to say that in my Aunt Olympia's house also, they were all in bed with the fever. My parents went their also to care for them. Then, in time, everybody got better, but four of them always remained with some traces of the fever which weakened them one after the other, in a few years these four died Francisco, Jacinta, Florinda and Teresa. In those days my parents did nothing except go from house to house, to treat the sick. My father and my brother Manuel also cared for the animals that were in their pens bleating with hunger and they brought the milk to give to the sick and the children. To these they also gave soups made of softened bread in chicken broth, to the older ones mince meat in the chicken broth, with rice and the same was given to the sick who were getting better.

The need was so great, that my parents did not hesitate to allow me to spend some nights in the home of a widow who lived alone with her son, who was in the last stages of Tuberculosis. In this way she would be able to rest, knowing that she had an eleven year old girl there, who could take a glass of water or bowl of broth to her son, or who would call her should he need something else. I don't remember the name of this woman or of her son, but I do recall the house. It was between the home of my Aunt Olympia and the blacksmith's. In order to enter one had to climb a stone stairway which led from the street. The young patient spent the night sitting in bed, propped up on pillows struggling to breathe. At times I went to the kitchen to fetch the fan and waved it before his face, to try to give him a little air. When he saw me there, he was so pleased, that he would say that those were the best nights he spent.

Some people also warned my father that it was foolish to allow me to go to that house because I might catch the disease. My father replied: "God will not repay me with evil for the good that I do Him!" And so it happened! My father's trust was not confounded, because today I am almost 82 years old and yet I have not felt even the slightest trace of that disease!

One day, I heard a conversation which my mother was having with the Father Vicar of Olival who asked her about my father. My mother said: "He was always a good Christian, practicing

Catholic and a good worker, even as a youth. Therefore I liked him very much and we were married. He was always very faithful to his religious duties and to his state, and a very good friend to me and the children. When I told him that God was going to grant us a seventh child, he responded ‘ Don’t be troubled! It is one more blessing from God. Therefore there will be no lack of bread in the drawer nor oil in the pot’

On Sundays and Holy days of obligation, my father went with the whole family to assist at Holy Mass—almost always at the midday Mass. We rested a little longer in the morning, took care of the animals, put the house in order, left the dinner prepared, and went altogether, well rested and without preoccupation’s.

When I was still very small, my father carried me in his arms or seated me on his shoulder. When we arrived at Church, he handed me to my mother, because at that time, the men were separated from the women in the choir and in the sanctuary. On returning, after Mass, he likewise came home with the family. My older sister went in front, each one speaking with their fiancé who waited for them in the church yard; my parents were the last couple who followed behind, talking also with my godfather Anastacio, my godmother Teresa, my uncles and the other people who joined them, and along the way they bid us farewell at their own homes, saying ‘Good bye, until we meet again’.

The others continued on their way and, upon arriving at our house, they said goodbye with the same Adeus and proceeded further on. It was the same for my sister’s friends: they bid us farewell, to return later on at mid-afternoon, to continue their conversations. We entered the house, ate our dinner, and while my mother, and some of my sisters, tidied the kitchen, the others and my brother took care of the animals. If it was good weather, my father sat on a stone bench, which was on the patio, at the kitchen doorway, playing cards and talking with my uncles and the others; my sisters dispersed in pairs, to the shade of the fig trees, talking with their fiancés; my mother, with my godmother Teresa, aunts and other neighbours, sat on the small steps which we climbed from the side of the road, to enter our house. While some rocked their babies to sleep they were at the same time, conversing and watching their older children who were playing on the road, running up and down amusing themselves with their children’s games and, at times, imitating the processions which they had seen, singing Litany’s of the saints ect.

At sunset when the bells of the Church rang for the Angelus, my father got up and with him, all the others. Removing his cap, my father led the three Hail Mary’s to which they responded. Then, quite content, they said goodbye, each one going to his own home to have their evening meal and rest. For they had spent the Lord’s day well and in His grace, having fulfilled His law and were thus ready to carry on with their labours the following day.

And the friends of my sisters and the other young girls who came there, left also, some passing over the serra in the direction of the hamlets; others walking along the paths, in the direction of Santa Catarina, passing near the Cova da Iria, which at that time was no more than a deserted field, where maize and potatoes grew in the hollow, with olive trees on the slope, which produced a fine olive oil, the holm oak trees which bore the sweet acorns for both animals and men; the strawberry-tree which produced berries used for making aguardente (a home made potent liquor); hay and grass, food for the animals; and the brushwood, for the farm yard pens. And they went along paths yet further away, playing their harmoniums and guitars, singing and hoping to return on the following Sunday.

After supper, my father intoned the thanksgiving, prayed the Rosary—for it was not a day on which we did evening work—and went to rest, since at dawn of the following day he would have to rise early, in order to resume his week day work. My father and my brother, were the ones who slaughtered the pigs of my godfather Anastacio and ours also; singing them;

washing them and hanging them, to drain off, until the next day. Afterwards they broke them off into sections, cutting the meat into pieces, leaving separated, in earthen ware pans, those which were to be placed on the salting board, those which were to be made into sausages, those to be consumed fresh and that which was to be shared with people who had none. These persons, those to whom it was given, were the parish priest; also a little old man who lived alone in a tiny house close to the house of my Aunt Olympia, the mother of Jacinta, another lame and crippled man, who also lived alone three houses away, on the left hand side going toward Fatima; and old woman, who also lived alone in a small house next to the blacksmith's shop on the left side, coming towards our house and the widow of Uncle Agostinho who also lived alone, since the death of her husband. I was then sent to take our little gift to these people.

There was a small white wicker basket in our house, in which my father told me I had come from heaven with flowers. It was only used when they dressed me as a little angel, to walk in the processions carrying it with flowers, to strew before Our Lord, and also to carry our gifts to the poor and to our friends. On Christmas Eve, after supper, while we waited until it was time to go to Midnight Mass, we stayed near the fire-place, making the *filhoses*. While my mother and sisters stretched out the dough and laid it flat in the boiling oil, my father with a large iron fork, would turn them over and remove them to an earthenware pan, placing them inside a sieve to drain.

At the exact hour, we went to midnight Mass, bringing the wicker basket with the gift of the *filhoses* that I carried up to the infant Jesus, when I went to venerate His image after Mass, and again, on Christmas morning, to the persons mentioned above. Our flock was, usually of some 20 or 30 sheep. In the spring they doubled, or even tripled, because many of the sheep had double offspring. My father killed the male lambs for food for the family, and used the milk for breakfast and making cheese. The ewes were allowed to be nourished and to grow, but as soon as they begun to eat, they were separated, in order to use the milk for the same purpose. And, when they had grown large, my father chose the best to provide continuity to the flock; and those left over, with the older and tired sheep he sold.

It was my father who killed the foxes, hares, genets and rabbits which he hunted with skill, placing the traps on the large flat stones, he skinned them and prepared them for my mother to cook; he hung the skins on the branches of the fig tree, so they could be sold to the mule drivers who would be passing by. When the bells of the Parish Church rang out the evening Angelus, my father stopped his work. Removing his cap, he prayed the three Hail Mary's and came home. While he waited for supper—if it was good weather (if it was not he waited by the hearth) he sat on a stone bench which was on the patio, leaning against the wall of the kitchen with me on his knees, he amused himself by telling me stories, and teaching me to sing local songs, *fados* and popular songs of ten stanzas or four line verses, etc.

My mother was there at her work. From time to time she came over to us and said: "What are you teaching this little one! If only you would teach her doctrine!" Then my father would say: "Let's do as your mother wishes!" And he took hold of my little hand, teaching me to trace the sign of the Cross on my forehead, mouth and heart. Afterwards he would teach me to pray the Our Father, Hail Mary, the Creed, how to prepare for Confession, the Act of Contrition, the Commandments of God, etc. Later on when we were altogether at supper, he made me repeat what I had learned and, quite content; he turned to my mother and said: "Do you see! It was I who taught her." My mother, smiling, replied: "You are indeed a good man. May you always be so!" My father answered: "God has given me the best woman in the world!" This is what made me believe that my mother was the best in the world and, when the other children came to our patio to play with me, I used to ask them: "Is your mother good? My mother is the best in the world!"

Sometimes in the evening, he took me to the threshing floor and we sat down on the stone seats, to enjoy the cool breeze, which was so pleasant there. And then, pointing to Heaven, he would say to me: "Look, up above, its Our Lady's and Angels: the moon is the lamp of Our Lady, the stars are the lamps of the Angels, which they and Our Lady light and place in the windows of Heaven, in order to light up our way at night. The sun which you see come up every day, over there, at the back of the serra, is Our Lord's lamp which He lights up every day to keep us warm and so that we can see in order to do our work." Because of this, I used to tell the other children that the moon was Our Lady's lamp, the stars the lamp of the Angels and the sun the lamp of Our Lord.

There on the threshing- floor, he continued to teach me the truths of the faith, to sing and to dance. From time to time, my mother and my older sisters—those who were at home—came to peep through the branches of the fig trees and, laughing they would say: "She looks like a little spinning top, with her tiny arms in the air, trying to imitate all the movements she sees father making." And my mother would come, with a cup of refreshment made of honey prepared with cool water taken from the well at the last moment so that my father could drink it with his little spinning top. And she also sat down at my father's side, talking joyfully and laughing feeling so content.

My father also used to tell me that, when there was a thunder storm it was our Heavenly Father scolding men because of their sins. One day, my father was working near the well. I was there playing near him. Suddenly the weather began to grow dark, to thunder and rain. My father threw down the hoe, grasped hold of me and ran to the house. Once at home I asked him: "Its our Heavenly Father scolding someone. Who has sinned, was it you father, or other people?" My father responded: "It was I and others also. Lets pray to St Barbara, to deliver us from thunder and lightening!" And he knelt down with my mother and my older sisters who were at home, in front of a crucifix which was on the wall of the outside room, to pray Our Fathers and Hail Mary's.

On rainy days, when he was unable to go to the fields to work, my father was at home, where he would cut the fire wood to the exact size for use in the oven and the fire place and then put in stacks on the patio to dry. Afterwards he put it away in the shed, and in the oven room, in order to keep it dry so that it would burn without smoking. If he happened to be home, on the days on which my mother was baking bread, he helped her to put the wood in the oven. When it was already hot, he took the ashes outside, cleaned the oven and, while my mother molded the bread, he placed it with a baking- shovel into the oven to bake.

If my sister Maria dos Anjos had a lot of work, he sat at the weaver's shuttle filling the spools for the loom. If he saw my mother carrying the pitchers, he took them from her hand and went to the well to fetch the water. He did the same with the pails of food for the animals, taking it to them and looking after them. My mother said that, when the new babies were born and they cried during the night, it was my father who got up to attend to them and carried them to her bed so she could give them a little milk without having to get up herself.

One day, I went to the rabbit burrow, I caught a tiny rabbit and took him outside to play with him on the patio, but I did not hold on to it very well and the little rabbit ran away from me. I went to tell my mother and she scolded me, saying I was naughty and disobedient, because she had told me many times already that I was not to go the rabbit burrow. Then I asked: "You say that I am bad, father says I came from Heaven in a wicker basket with flowers. So then are there bad things in Heaven also?" My mother replied: "Well, yes, the demons were angels who were in Heaven, but because they were bad, God put them out and now they go about, tempting everyone. As for you, He sent you here below, to see if you'll be good, so as to be able to return there."

And I replied: "But I don't remember!" "But of course not" responded my mother, "because you were a sleep and you are very forgetful." That night, when my father came home, I told him what my mother had said to me and he replied: "Very well, but don't be worried! That's for when you are older; as for now, you are very small. Therefore you still have a lot of time to become good." It seems that he guessed rightly, because I am nearly 82 years old and still going along here, in the hope of being good in order to go to Heaven.

But, as Jesus Christ has said that only God is good. He will have to take me there, in His mercy, without waiting for me to be good. I just finished revealing—with deep emotion—what I was able to recall of the life of my father, in the bosom of his family, approximately up to the time of the Apparitions.

By that time, more or less, my two older sisters had married and left home to go and set up their own homes. With this our house was like a desert. The young girls who came to learn weaving and sewing, stopped coming, because my sisters who used to teach them, were no longer there. The children who came to our patio, to play with me, also did not come anymore because I spent the day in the field with my sheep. Only a small group of neighbours came to wait for me, as evening fell, in order to spend the last hours of day light together with me, and on our threshing floor, to watch out for Our Lady and the Angels to come to light their lamps and place them in the windows of Heaven, to light up the way for us.

This marvellous threshing floor—which they tell me has been destroyed—how I wish that Father Rector would order it restored, not only as a remembrance of my parents, where they enjoyed the fresh air of the serene summer nights, teaching me to raise my eyes to Heaven, where Our Lord is Our Lady and the Angels who watch over us and help us on our paths through life, but also for the children of that time, especially the servants of God Francisco and Jacinta Marto, who used to run there to join me, waiting and watching for when Our Heavenly Mother would come with the Angels to light their lamps and place them in the windows of Heaven to light the way for us.

It is true, this is a little child's perception, but it teaches us to lift our gaze to Heaven, where we know that God Our Father is, the Blessed Mother whom He gave us and watches over us, and the Angels that He created and destined to guide us and lead us on the paths of life.

During The Apparitions

The Apparitions came to pass. While my mother was so distressed, my father maintained an attitude of faith and trust. When my mother became even more upset, judging everything to be a hoax my father said: "Don't be upset! We do not know if it is true, but we also do not know if it is a lie. Let's wait and see."

When he saw the harvest lost in the Cova da Iria, he said: "For this year all is lost, but, in October, if the Lady stops coming, the people will stop going there also, and we can return to cultivate it as before." When after the Apparitions, he saw that the people continued to go there, and the property was lost, he said: "If it was Our Lady who appeared there, she will help us get along without the Cova da Iria." Also during the Apparitions—it must have been towards the end of July—one day, as evening fell, my father arrived home, called me and said to me: "Look, now you're going to tell me the truth, whether you saw that Lady in the Cova da Iria or not.

Don't be afraid to say that you didn't see Her, or if you said that for a joke and right away all the people believed—or simply that you lied. There are many persons in the world who tell lies; don't be afraid to say so if you did. Then the people will stop going the Cova da Iria and everything will be finished." I answered: "I know. But if I saw, how can I say that I did not

see? And the lady says to continue to come every month, until October". My father got up and we went home.

The next day, after supper my father said to me: "While your mother and your sisters straighten the kitchen, you come along with me to the threshing floor." We went. My father sat on one side of the stone seats that was there, made me sit at his side and said to me: "Tomorrow morning very early, you go with the sheep to the Cova da Iria. I'm going with you". I replied: "I'm just sorry for Jacinta, because I'm sure her mother will not let her go so early." My father answered: "That's not so important. Go and tell Aunt Olympia that, very early tomorrow morning, you are going with our sheep to the Cova da Iria. Jacinta and Francisco, if they wish, can go there later.

Tell her that you are going there early because it is so far away and that you want to come home earlier because of the heat; and that if people come wanting to speak to you, your mother will tell them to go there to find you, since your sisters are very busy and cannot go, and take your place." I went to give the message to my Aunt who answered: "Very well; but for now say nothing to Jacinta, so she'll not be crying. I'll tell her in the morning."

On the following day, my father called me very early in the morning. I got up and we had our breakfast, while my mother took the milk from the sheep, then we went out by way of the wasteland so as to avoid meeting people along the way. We could hardly see. When we arrived at the Cova da Iria, the first sign of day break began to appear behind the serra, in the direction of Aljustrel.

We crossed over the road and descended the slope, between the olive trees, guiding the sheep along the narrow way in a zig zag fashion—since one could not descend straight down—to the Cova. There my father saw that in fact, everything had been trampled on and eaten by the animals. From the crop sown that year, which was corn, no profit at all would be gained. And he said: "We've lost twenty measures of grain, along with the kidney beans and the pumpkins which were planted in between. Patience!"

We left the sheep in the Cova, to take advantage of the grass which still remained on the edges, and we climbed the hillside in front, along side the great holm-oak tree. On top, behind the spot where one now finds the Basilica, there was a piece of flat land, with some holm-oak and olive trees between which my father used to sow, in alternating years wheat, chick-peas or rye etc. There things were not so spoiled but the tops of the trees were already eaten away by animals, just like those on the hill side. My father saw this and said: "Indeed we can expect no harvest from here. Perhaps there may be only some olives, acorns, or berries that could be saved from the tree tops."

He saw the little stone wall that we were making when we saw the reflection of the light from Our Lady—which we thought was lightening—and we descended the slope by the side of the large holm-oak tree, at the front of which, a little below, was the small holm-oak where Our Lady appeared.

My father approached it, looked at it and asked: "It is here that the Lady appears?" "Yes it is" I replied. "How many more times is the Lady to come?" "Until October" I answered. "If the Lady does not return afterwards, the people will also stop coming and next year we will return to cultivate the Cova da Iria as before." And he asked: "What do people come here to do?" I replied "They come to pray the Rosary and they all want me to pray with them." "well now," said my father "You pray the Rosary with me also" "Yes I will pray." My father knelt with me, before the little holm-oak tree, and we prayed the Rosary.

When we had finished, my father got up and said: "Now you stay here with the sheep. I'm going to see your brother who is working on the moor land. When the day begins to get too

hot, you are to go home with the sheep.” And I remained alone—I don’t know if I cried—in that lonely field, where I heard only the tinkling of the sheep bells, the chirping of the little birds, hopping on the treetops and the crowing of the cocks in the Moita hen-houses.

By midmorning, two groups of people arrived there. The first one came from the direction of Moita and Santa Catarina. Hardly had I finished praying the Rosary with this group, when another appeared, coming from Montelo and from the direction of Minde. I prayed another Rosary with them also. And then, with my sheep I went home, since the heat was already so intense. My father also came home to eat supper. Afterwards, he told my mother all that he had seen. For that year, he told her, we could count on nothing from the Cova da Iria; everything was destroyed. But he continued: “If it is Our Lady who appears there, She will help us!”

My mother continued: “Our Lady? If only it was Our Lady! Who can tell us that it’s Our Lady? Not at all! It’s evil, it’s the devil who has come into our home. We were so happy and now we cannot get rid of all these people, constantly knocking on the door, wanting to see and speak with our little girl; and unless we go and fetch her, they won’t go away. If at least you would come home, you could help send them away.”

“But”, my father answered, “I don’t know what to say to them and I cannot be rude to them, by sending them away from here. So that’s why I don’t come.” It happened that, many people took advantage of the evening, at the end of the day’s work, to come to our house, in order to find out what was going on. I don’t know, but perhaps my mother may not have been completely mistaken, that, partly, it could also have been the devil who was furious, and wished to hinder the good which the Message came to bring to the world.

What cost my father more and made him avoid being there, instead of coming home at night as soon as he had finished his work, as was his custom, was to find the house continually invaded by strangers, asking impertinent, curious and even—very often—misleading questions, from which he did not know how to get away.

A few days before the 13th of August, Ti Marto and my father were notified to appear at the Administration Office of Villa Nova de Ourem, with their children. My uncle, Ti Marto said: “I’m not taking my children. I’m not going to bring such small children before a tribunal.” My father said: “I’m taking my daughter, because I understand nothing about these things.”

The following morning, in the company of Ti Marto, he took me to Villa Nova de Ourem. My father and Ti Marto went on foot. I went riding on the back of a donkey, from which I fell about three times, not because I was not used to riding but because I was falling asleep, due to the sound of my father and Ti Marto conversing and of the slow, easygoing pace of the donkey. But the falls did not hurt me because I only tumbled down towards the front. And my father came running, to set me once again on top of the donkey and to exhort me to be careful not to fall.

At the office of the Administration, the Administrator questioned my father and my uncle Ti Marto, to whom was given a strong rebuke for not having brought his children, as he had been told to do. He questioned me also, wanting me to tell him the secret. Seeing that he couldn’t get anything from me, he dismissed us and in the afternoon we returned home.

At home, my father, always serene and tranquil, recounted what had happened to my mother and the family. He only said: “I lost a day’s work because of this. Patience! If it is Our Lady who appears, she will help us.” It was a sign of his unfailing confidence in the protection of Our Lady. He showed the same trust, when some days later, they took us prisoners to Villa Nova de Ourem, Francisco, Jacinta and myself. My father said: “I am not worried about

them; they cannot do any harm to children that age. And if it is Our Lady who appears to them, She will protect them.”

On the 13th of October, because the rumour was spreading that, at the moment of the apparitions in the Cova da Iria, they were going to throw a bomb and that we would all die there, my parents, for the first and last time, wished to accompany me, saying: “If she is going to die, we want to die also at her side.” And they left the house with me, but, on the way, I lost sight of them, amidst the multitude of people who crowded around me. (*)

(*) “That is, my mother, for my father managed to break through me from the crowd and take me by the hand up to the little holm-oak tree.” (Author’s note in letter of 16 April 1989)

After The Apparitions

When after the Apparitions, my father began to see that the people, instead of ceasing to go there—as he hoped—went more and more in greater numbers, transforming that site into a sacred place, of faith, prayer and confidence in the maternal protection of the Mother of God, He said: “We’ve lost the Cova da Iria forever.

We can no longer count on the produce of that land but if it is the work of God He will help us to get along without it.” When they came to say that the people were leaving money near the little holmoak tree where Our Lady had appeared which was collected and left for him in compensation for the loss of the land, he said: “God forbid that I should keep this money! It doesn’t belong to me. It belongs to Our Lady! Neither do I want anyone in my family to keep as much as five cents of that mother! As for the loss of the land it is Our Lady who will repay me and She will help us.”

It was thus that Senora Maria Carreira—who got the name of Ti Maria da Capelinha”—began to keep the money so that it would not be stolen. Later on they went to ask my father’s permission to build a little Chapel of Apparitions (Capelinha). He not only gave the authorization, he wanted to contribute, giving for that purpose twenty square meters of land with a strip of land for access from the road to the site of Capelinha. He thought in the beginning, of putting up an iron fencing as a barrier, which the people could not cross over, thus allowing him to continue to cultivate the land which remained. But, then he realized that the multitudes could not be held back, and therefore it was useless.

The number of persons flowing continually to our home, wishing to see me and to speak with me, was greater than ever. My mother did not know what to do! She discussed the situation with my father, to see what solution they could find. She was not able to go constantly to the field to get me, nor did she have anyone to send to take my place, and then people would not go away without my coming to attend to them and to go to Cova da Iria to pray the Rosary with them. And people from every part came from far and near, rich and poor, priests, learned and simple people from the villages, many with their sick who were so pitiful!

My father suggested selling the sheep. My mother replied: “I already thought of that. But how can we get along without the products of the sheep? The wool that we use there at home and that which we sell, the pigs that are killed each year for the sustenance of the family, the hogs and sheep which are sold to help with expenses of the house, the milk and the cheese! And now we no longer have the produce of the Cova da Iria!

How can we manage without all that?” My father responded: “Perhaps with what cultivate in those other fields, we might be able to make up what we have lost here and there. We can try it, if afterwards we find that we cannot make ends meet without the sheep, we can buy them again. And the little one could start going to school.

The first school for girls has just been opened in Fatima—and you can tell those who come wishing to see her and speak with her, that she is in school and that they can find her there;

then the teacher may do as she thinks best, and you will feel relieved. God will help us! As many sacrifices as we make, we will never be able to repay God for the grace of sparing us from the influenza epidemic which did not enter our home, nor did He allow any of the children who were here during those days to become ill.”

Because of the fuss that there was in the village against the parish priest, in which my father did not wish to be involved, but which left him with a bad impression, he stopped making his Easter duty, as was his custom, and kept away from the parish priest, no longer confessing to him. But he did not stay away from the Church; he continued to go to Holy Mass every Sunday and on Holy days. He went instead to Vila Nova de Ourem for confession, and each year he went to confession and Holy Communion.

(Authors note: when in the Memoirs, I say “Because we had already lost some of the lands, the means of subsistence began to grow scarce in our house” I wished to refer to the loss of the Cova da Iria and the lack of sheep products. My explanation was very incomplete, due to lack of time and the conditions conducive to re-reading it and correcting it.) for the feast of Our Lady of Ortiga, in order to gain the jubilee indulgence. He went there in the last year of his life, and took me with him, a few days before his death.

Afterwards, we went to supper at the home of my sister Teresa, who lived near there, in a place called Lomba. And she hardly expected that it would be the last time she would speaking to our father or see him alive! And so it is, this mortal life, in which we find ourselves it disappears like smoke, which vanishes in the air.

Happily, my father accomplished well his mission on earth. He fell sick on 30th July 1919. My mother called for a doctor who diagnosed it as a case of double pneumonia. He prescribed treatment but the medicines were of no avail. On the following morning, feeling somewhat worse, my father asked my mother if she would send for the priest, to make confession and receive the last Sacraments. My mother warned him that, very likely, she would only be able to find the parish priest.

“Don’t worry about that!” answered my father. “It doesn’t matter, as long as it is a priest!” My mother sent for the priest, but the parish priest delayed, thinking it was not an urgent case, and my father died in the arms of my mother and of his sister Olympia, repeating the ejaculations which they were suggesting to him and which were used at the time in such cases: “Jesus, Mary, Joseph save my soul which belongs to you!” “Lord Jesus, have mercy on me, by the merits of Your Life, Passion, and Death on the Cross!” “Father into Your Hands I commend my spirit!”

Thus I feel entirely at peace, with respect to the eternal salvation of my father, certain that the Lord received His beautiful soul, into the arms of His infinite Mercy and presented him into the full possession of the immense Being of God, Our Father.

As I write this, I am recalling the story of King David, who in spite having been such a great sinner—was chosen by God, to have among his descendants, St Joseph, Our Lady and Jesus Christ, Son of David—Hosanna, to the Son of David! The One Who said He had come to save sinners, because it is not the healthy who need the doctor but, indeed, it is the sick.

Letter to Rev. Fr. Luciano Guerra

J. + M.

To Rev. Fr. Luciano Guerra

In response to the letter of Your Reverence of 23 November 1988, I am sending the description of that—with the deepest sentiments—I recall about my father. I hope that something will be of use in fulfilling the wishes of Your Reverence. With regard to the clock,

which was in my parents home, I received a letter from my niece Maria Rosa, who is living in Brazil, saying that she already gave it to her sister Preciosa, who also lives in Brazil.

She is thinking of coming here next Summer in order to bring. They say that the casement is not the same any more because their mother—my sister Gloria—seeing that the original one was so old, substituted it for another which she ordered to be made. It is a pity but now there is nothing to be done.

I also have three objects—very small—which were from our home. I don't know if they interest you, if so I have already asked permission to give them to you. One in the Imitation of Christ which my mother sent to me at Porto when I was in school there, along with another book which she used to read to us. But this one the superior did not give to me.

She told me that in school I could not read it, but she would give it to me when I left, but until today. I suppose it could have been the Missao Abreviada, by the appearance and being a book with which I was already familiar, but as I only saw in the hands of the superior and did not see the title, I cannot be sure. The Imitation of Christ I have always carried with me. It is now very old, but it's the same one.

The other two objects are: two crochet needles, those with which my mother taught me when I was still a child. One is made of metal and I used it to make lace for underclothing. The other is of bone, which I used for making woolen garments for warmth in winter. Jacinta began to work with these, because she wanted to learn and so I taught her.

And very soon, she was making the narrow lace quite well. The needle made of bone has no large hook now but I worked with the small one up until a short time ago. I have always kept these with me, as a remembrance of my mother and of Jacinta, but as there are many of these here in the house, if I should need one, I won't miss them. That is all for today. In union of prayers.

Coimbra, February 23, 1989

Sr. Maria Lucia

J. + M.

To the Rector of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Fatima

Pax Christi

The two crochet needles included here are the ones with which my mother and my two older sisters, Maria and Teresa, taught me to crochet, when I was still a child. With the metal one, the Servant of God, Jacinta also learned. Seated near me, she saw me crocheting and asked me to teach her, and while I was working with the needle made of bone, making woolen garments, I loaned her the metal one and taught her to decorate underclothing, which she was able to do quite well.

I have always carried them and kept them with me, as a remembrance of my mother and of my childhood, along with the Imitation of Christ, which my mother sent to Porto for me when I was in school there. It is with love and devotion that I now,—with the permission of our Mother Prioress—detach myself from these humble objects and offer them to Our Lady for Her Sanctuary of Fatima, to place in the house belonging to my parents, and which today is Hers, for the glory of God and joy of our pilgrim brothers and sisters. May they always give praise and glory to God and to Our Lady.

Coimbra, March 15, 1989

Sr. Lucia

J. + M.

To the rector of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Fatima
Pax Christi

I beg your pardon since I am only now responding to your letter of 16 March 1989. Time did not allow me to do otherwise. As to your note in reference to what I have written about my father, in the last period of his life, Your Reverence says: "Since you made reference to the crisis which your father passed through, people may consider that it would be well to refer to that crisis in this Memoir."

I always try—as much as possible—not to repeat what I have already said elsewhere in order to save time and to avoid what seems unnecessary to me. Thus, the content of the last manuscript seemed to me sufficient to explain and complete the statement in the Memoirs, since the result had seemed to be so inadequate.

Despite the great mystery of human weakness, my father never went to excess, to the point of losing his balance, nor failed in the awareness of his duties as a Christian and practicing Catholic, always maintaining the dignity of his personality as head and father of the family, faithful to his matrimonial promises, friend of his wife and children, preserving peace and serenity in his home.

Finally, I recall the holy King David who, in spite of having been so great a sinner, because he repented, did penance and changed his life, was chosen by God so that from among his descendents would be born St. Joseph, Our Lady and Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Thus, I believe that what counts more in the sight of God is not so much the sin as the humble repentance with which we ask pardon along with the sincere intention of never again offending the Lord.

In their regard, I am remembering what St. Irenaeus tells us: "It is in the weakness of Man that God manifests His power." Yes, only God is great and powerful, above all in His merciful love! To Him be our gratitude, praise and love.

Because of your letter, I re-read the manuscript about my father and verified that, on page 20, paragraph 6, it would be well to add, at the end of the sentence, a note to clarify the meaning of what I say there: "That is, my mother, for my father managed to break through the crowd and take me by the hand up to the little holmoak tree." And may God help us with the maternal protection of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Coimbra, April 16, 1989

Sr. Lucia

J + M

Carmelo of St. Teresa, Coimbra, December 10, 1951

To His Excellency The Bishop (D. Jose Alves Correia da Silva)

I am grateful for the two letters of Your Excellency, the first of which crossed with one of my own. I received also pictures of Jacinta and the cloth for the relics. As soon as they are ready, I shall send them as you wish, and if Your Excellency desires more, you have only to send us the pictures, on which we put the relic and then we will send them back. We usually put the seal of our Order on the back with its emblem. I do not know if Your Excellency has one of the Diocese or of the Sanctuary. If you have and prefer that we use that one, in your kindness could you please send it to us.

Now, Your Excellency, I ask your permission to clarify something that seems to me necessary for the glory of God. Some have spoken to me of a film, which was being spread, I believe in Portugal, Spain and America, and according to what they have told me, the picture they give of my father is false and, besides being false, it is not edifying to souls, nor for the

glory of God. According to what was told to me, they picture my father miserably intoxicated, selling the Cova da Iria bit by bit, greedily running away with a bag of money ect. ect. Now, nothing of this it true.

Your Excellency and the priests appointed by you at the Sanctuary know very well that my father not only sold absolutely nothing of the Cova da Iria, but, neither he nor his wife nor any of his daughters nor his son, kept anything at all of the money which the people left in their faith near the Holm-oak tree, and this, in spite of being on his land, which, from the time of the Apparitions was rendered useless for producing anything, making what, until then was cultivated there, a grave loss to the family sustenance. To a rich family, this would not have been a great loss, but to the poor even a little is a big loss.

As for the drinking, again thanks be to God, it was not as they say, nor as Fr. De Marchi wrote in the first edition of his book, *A Lady More Brilliant than the Sun*. If my father did sometimes drink a little more than those who drank nothing, he never carried it to the point of creating disorder at home, nor of ill treating his wife and children. He was a sincere and honest man and, although he died within 24 hours of double pneumonia, he left his family neither weighed down in debt nor with the burden of any troublesome business.

If it is true that some years passed without his having made his Easter duty in the Parish, because of a disagreement that he had with the parish priest and he did not stop going every year, to Our Lady of Ortiga, on her feast day and there he confessed and received Holy Communion in order to gain the Jubilee Indulgence.

And he said that he did this because there he could choose another confessor instead of the parish priest and he did not have to go to the sacristy to recite his doctrine. Even in the last year of his life, he went there and took me with him, and after receiving Holy Communion went to eat at the home of my sister Teresa, who was already married and lived in a near by place called Lomba. He went also to Mass on Sundays. Usually, he carried me with him and when we arrived at the Church he climbed the steps to the choir, where the men assisted at Mass, and sent me to join my mother who was in the body of the Church, with the other women.

It was after Mass, in the company of his friends, that he delayed longer coming home, and at night, when he came from work and went to give an account to my godfather Anastacio of how things were going on in their fields (as he took care of both ours and theirs), he remained longer talking and in the tavern, and came home late; with that my mother, so used to seeing him at home at suppertime and spending the evening working joyfully in the bosom of the family, was distressed.

For my mother in her uprightness of spirit, this was indeed a great fault. I have referred to this in one of the writings which you requested of me, but perhaps I did not know how to express myself very well. The hard times our family went through just then, or at least the lack of former abundance was due to various things and circumstances, among them—and one of the principal causes—was the Apparitions.

The Cova da Iria, as I said, left quite a need in our family's livelihood; moreover, it was my mother, and not my father as Dr. Walsh states erroneously in his book, who decided to sell the flock because of the many people who sought me and, who were so insistent in wanting to speak with me, that they were offended if they were not satisfied.

It was for this reason, and not for any other that my mother sold the flock—because otherwise, one of my sisters would have to lose a day's work at home in order to replace me in the field—and the produce of the flock was also that my two older sisters married. One was a weaver

and the other seamstress and therefore, they had also helped very much with the income from their work.

Added to this, there was the great perplexity of my mother with regard to the Apparitions, which more than anything else was the cause of her trouble and lamentation.

Please excuse this explanation but I thought it was called for in the interests of Justice and charity, and because of the veneration and respect in which I hold the memory of my father. With gratitude to Your Excellency, I humbly and respectfully kiss your holy ring and ask your blessing. With the greatest respect and filial devotion.

Maria Lucia of the Immaculate Heart, I.C.D.

Introduction

The text which follows is a document written by Sister Lucia, in the third person, towards the end of 1927, at the request of her spiritual director, Rev. Fr. P. Aparicio, S.J. Shortly after this apparition, which took place in her cell on the 10th of December, 1925, Sister Lucia wrote out a first account of it, which she herself later destroyed. This present document, therefore, is a second account.

It is exactly the same as the first, except for the fact that she added the introductory paragraph, dated 17th of December, 1927, in which she explained how she received authorization from heaven to make known part of the secret.

We have entitled this document: "Text of the great promise of the Heart of Mary". Truly, it is the expression of the merciful and gratuitous Will of God, offering us a sure and easy way of salvation, given that it is supported by the most sound Catholic tradition concerning the saving efficacy of Mary's intercession.

This text tells us the conditions required in order to respond to Our Lady's appeal for the Five First Saturdays of the month, in reparation for the injuries committed against the Heart of Mary. Nor should this deeper intention of reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary ever be forgotten.

Text of the great promise of the Heart of Mary, in the apparition at Pontevedra, Spain

J. M. J.

On December 17th, 1927, she went before the tabernacle to ask Jesus how she should comply with what had been asked of her, that is, to say if the origin of the devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary was included in the Secret that the most holy Virgin had confided to her.

Jesus made her hear very distinctly these words: "My daughter, write what they ask of you. Write also all that the most holy Virgin revealed to you in the Apparition, in which She spoke of this devotion. As for the remainder of the Secret, continue to keep silence."

What was confided on this subject in 1917, is as follows: She asked for them to be taken to heaven, and the most holy Virgin answered: "Yes. I will take Jacinta and Francisco soon. But you are to stay here some time longer. Jesus wishes to make use of you to make me known and loved. He wants to establish in the world devotion to my Immaculate Heart. I promise salvation to those who embrace it, and these souls will be loved by God, like flowers placed by me to adorn His throne."

On December 10th, 1925, the most holy Virgin appeared to her, and by her side, elevated on a luminous cloud, was a child. The most holy Virgin rested her hand on her shoulder, and as she did so, she showed her a heart encircled by thorns, which she was holding in her other hand. At the same time, the Child said: "Have compassion on the Heart of your most holy

Mother, covered with thorns, with which ungrateful men pierce it at every moment, and there is no one to make an act of reparation to remove them.”

Then the most holy Virgin said: “Look, my daughter, at my Heart, surrounded with thorns with which ungrateful men pierce me at very moment by their blasphemies and ingratitude. You at least try to console me and say that I promise to assist at the hour of death, with the graces necessary for salvation, all those who, on the first Saturday of five consecutive months, shall confess, receive Holy Communion, recite five decades of the Rosary, and keep me company for fifteen minutes while meditating on the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary, with the intention of making reparation to me.”

On February 15th, 1926, the Infant Jesus appeared to her again. He asked her if she had already spread the devotion to His most holy Mother. She told Him of the confessor’s difficulties, and said that Mother Superior was prepared to propagate it, but that the confessor had said that she, alone, could do nothing. Jesus replied: “It is true that your Superior alone can do nothing, but with my grace, she can do all.”

She placed before Jesus the difficulty that some people had about confessing on Saturday, and asked that it might be valid to go to confession within eight days. Jesus answered: “Yes, and it could be longer still, provided that, when they receive Me, they are in state of grace and have intention of making reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.” She then asked: “My Jesus, what about those who forget to make this intention?” Jesus replied: “They can do so at their next confession, taking advantage of the first opportunity to go to confession.”

Some days later, Sister Lucia wrote down a full account of this apparition, which was sent to Msgr. Manuel Pereira Lopes, afterwards Vicar General of the Diocese of Porto, who had been Lucia’s confessor during her stay at Vilar do Oporto. This unpublished document was Inserted by Rev. Dr. Sebastiao Martins dos Reis in his entitled: “A life in the service of Fatima” cf. pp 336-357.

On the 15th of February 1926, I was very busy at my work, and was not thinking of this at all. I went to throw out a pan full of rubbish beyond vegetable garden, in the same place where, some months earlier, I had met a child. I had asked him if he knew the Hail Mary, and he said he did, whereupon I requested him to say it so that I could hear him. But, as he made no attempt to say it by himself, I said it with him three times over, at the end of which I asked him to say it alone. But as he remained silent and was unable to say the Hail Mary alone, I asked him if he knew where the Church of Santa Maria was, to which he replied that he did. I told him to go there everyday and to say this: O my heavenly Mother, give me your Child Jesus! I taught him this, and then left him.

On the 15th of February, 1926, going there as usual. I found a child who seemed to me to be the same one whom, I had previously met, so I questioned him: “Did you ask our Heavenly Mother for the Child Jesus?” The child turned to me and said: “And have you spread through the world what our heavenly Mother requested of you?”

With that, he was transformed into a resplendent Child. Knowing then that it was Jesus, I said: “My Jesus, you know very well what my confessor said to me in a letter that I read to You. He told me that it was necessary for this vision to be repeated, for further happenings to prove its credibility, and he added that Mother Superior, on her own could do nothing to propagate this devotion.”

“It is true your Superior alone can do nothing, but with my grace she can do all. It is enough that your confessor gives you permission and that your Superior speak of it, for it to be believed, even without people knowing to whom it has been revealed.” “But my confessor said in the letter that this devotion is not lacking in the world, because there are many souls

who receive You on the First Saturdays, in honour of Our Lady and of the Fifteen Mysteries of the Rosary.”

“It is true, my daughter, that many souls begin the First Saturdays, but few finish them, and those who do complete them do so in order to receive the graces that are promised thereby. It would please me more if they did five with fervor and with the intention of making reparation to the Heart of your heavenly Mother, than if they did fifteen, in a tepid and indifferent manner....”

Appendix

The text of this Appendix is not a document in Sister Lucia’s own handwriting, but it has all the guarantees of authenticity, seeing that it was her spiritual director, at this time Rev. Fr. Jose Bernardo Goncalves, S. J., who transcribed it directly and literally from the seer’s notes. The vision to which this text refers was granted to Sister Lucia on the 13th of June, 1929, in the chapel of her convent at Tuy, Spain.

The text begins with an account of the vision of the Most Holy Trinity, together with Our Lady showing her Heart, as in the Apparitions of June and July of 1917. The promise she had made then was now realized, and sister Lucia heard the Blessed Virgin ask for the consecration of Russia to her Immaculate Heart under certain well defined conditions. Has this Consecration already been carried out? The text itself, in the final paragraph, tells us that it has not, and speaks of the terrible consequences which result there from.

Text of the Request for the Consecration of Russia

Rev. Fr. Goncalves sometimes came to our chapel to hear confessions. I went to confession to him and, as I felt at ease with him, I continued to do so for the three years that he remained here as assistant to the Fr. Provincial.

It was at this time that Our Lady informed me that the moment had come in which she wished me to make known to Holy Church her desire for the Consecration of Russia, and, and her promise to convert it. The communication was as follows:

June 13, 1929. I had sought and obtained permission from my superiors and confessor to make a Holy Hour from eleven o’ clock until midnight, everything Thursday to Friday. Being alone one night, I knelt near the altar rails in the middle of the chapel and, prostrate, I prayed the prayers of the Angel. Feeling tired, I then stood up and continued to say the prayers with my arms in the form of a Cross.

The only light was that of the Sanctuary lamp. Suddenly the whole chapel was illuminated by a supernatural light, and above the altar appeared a Cross of light, reaching to the ceiling. In a brighter light on the upper part of the Cross, could be seen the face of a man and his body as far as the waist; upon his breast was a dove of light, nailed to the Cross I could see another man. A little below the waist I could see a large host suspended in the air, onto which drops of blood were falling from the face of Jesus Crucified and from the wound in His side.

These drops ran down on to the host and fell into the chalice. Beneath the right arm of the Cross was Our Lady and in Her hand was Her Immaculate Heart (It was Our Lady of Fatima, with Her Immaculate Heart in Her left hand, without a sword or roses, but with a crown of thorns and flames). Under the left arm of the Cross, large letters as if of crystal clear water which ran down upon the altar, formed these words: “Grace And Mercy”.

I understood that it was the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity which was shown to me, and I received lights about this mystery which I am not permitted to reveal. Our Lady then said to me: “The moment has come in which God asks the Holy Father, in union with all the Bishops of the world, to make the consecration of Russia to My Immaculate Heart, promising to save

it by this means. There are so many souls whom the justice of God condemns for sins committed against Me, that I have come to ask reparation: sacrifice yourself for this intention and pray.”

I gave an account of this to the confessor who asked me to write down what Our Lady wanted done. Later in an intimate communication, Our Lord complains to me, saying: “They did not wish to heed My request. Like the King of France they will repent and do it, but it will be late. Russia will have already spread her errors throughout the world, provoking wars and persecutions of the Church: the Holy Father will have much to suffer.”